

To: Mortensen, Ginah[mortensen.ginah@epa.gov]; Carleton, Ron[Carleton.Ron@epa.gov]; Woodward, Cheryl[Woodward.Cheryl@epa.gov]
Cc: Galloway, Carol[Galloway.Carol@epa.gov]; Carbone, Chad[Carbone.Chad@epa.gov]
From: Perla, Donna
Sent: Wed 4/20/2016 10:23:46 PM
Subject: RE: 145 House Members Demand Answers from EPA on Anti-Farmer Campaign EPA funds used in anti-farmer campaign in Washington State

I have seen this.

From: Mortensen, Ginah
Sent: Wednesday, April 20, 2016 5:48 PM
To: Carleton, Ron <Carleton.Ron@epa.gov>; Perla, Donna <Perla.Donna@epa.gov>; Woodward, Cheryl <Woodward.Cheryl@epa.gov>
Cc: Galloway, Carol <Galloway.Carol@epa.gov>; Carbone, Chad <Carbone.Chad@epa.gov>
Subject: FW: 145 House Members Demand Answers from EPA on Anti-Farmer Campaign EPA funds used in anti-farmer campaign in Washington State

Hello Ron, Donna, and Cheryl,

I just wanted to be sure you saw this. Please let me know if you subscribe to these notices and I won't forward anymore.

Thanks!

Ginah

Ginah Mortensen

913-551-5028

Attorney Advisor

Compliance Policy Staff

Monitoring, Assistance, and Media Programs Division

Office of Compliance

Director, EPA National Agriculture Center

1-888-663-2155

<http://www.epa.gov/agriculture>

From: House Committee on Agriculture [<mailto:agrepUBLICanpress@mail.house.gov>]
Sent: Wednesday, April 20, 2016 3:30 PM
To: Mortensen, Ginah
Subject: 145 House Members Demand Answers from EPA on Anti-Farmer Campaign EPA funds used in anti-farmer campaign in Washington State

	PRESS RELEASE
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April 20, 2016

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Date: April 20, 2016

Conaway: Haley Graves (202) 225-2171
Newhouse: Will Boyington (202) 225-5816
Ashford: Cody Uhing (202) 225-4155

145 House Members Demand Answers from EPA on Anti-Farmer Campaign

EPA funds used in anti-farmer campaign in Washington State

Today, Rep. Dan Newhouse (R-WA), House Agriculture Committee Chairman Mike Conaway (R-TX), and Rep. Brad Ashford (D-NE) were joined by 142 Members on a [bipartisan letter](#) to the

Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) Administrator Gina McCarthy. The Members request answers on EPA Region 10's funding of whatsupstream.com website and advocacy campaign in Washington State that attempts to influence legislators for greater regulation of farmers and ranchers.

Rep. Newhouse: "Federal law is clear, and the EPA knows better than to be engaged in the misuse of taxpayer dollars for anti-farmer publicity campaigns that lobby for more regulations. Despite previous EPA violations of federal laws pertaining to funding propaganda, advocacy, and lobbying efforts, it is troubling that the EPA has allowed taxpayer funds to be used to attack farmers. The EPA must be held accountable to cooperate fully with oversight investigations and

to end the pattern of taxpayer-funded lobbying efforts.”

Chairman Conaway: “This is one more example of the lack of appropriate oversight by EPA. I applaud Rep. Newhouse and many of my colleagues for holding EPA accountable for the unlawful misuse of federal funds. America’s farmers and ranchers deserve a government that will defend their cause and work to make sure it has a thriving future. These actions by EPA, however, do the opposite.”

Rep. Ashford: “I am disappointed in the actions taken by the EPA to lobby Washington State legislators using federal funds. With trust in our public officials at an all-time low, it is imperative that our federal agencies respect federal laws. I join my colleagues in the House and Senate to reprimand the EPA and call on them to fully cooperate with investigations. I do not want to see this misuse of federal funds impact other states, such as Nebraska.”

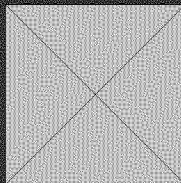
Background:

Earlier this month, the [EPA admitted in news reports that it should not have funded a campaign](#) in Washington State known as [whatsupstream.com](#), due to that campaign’s brazen lobbying of state legislators in contravention of federal law. The [whatsupstream.com](#) campaign, which was wholly funded by the EPA, used grant awards to fund a website, radio ads, and billboards depicting dead fish and polluted water, urging individuals to contact their state legislators and, “hold the agricultural industry to the same level of responsibility as other industries.” A large, red button on the website labeled, “Take action! We’ve made it simple,” allowed visitors to easily send an email to their state legislators advocating for 100-foot stream buffer zones and other policies. An [EPA Inspector General’s report from 2014](#) had warned that the EPA region responsible for awarding the grant had insufficient protections in place to ensure awardees were not using funds for advocacy, propaganda, and/or lobbying efforts.

According to a December, 2015 report by the Government Accountability Office (GAO), the [EPA violated federal lobbying and advocacy](#) laws by funding social media campaigns supporting EPA’s Waters of the United States (WOTUS) Rule.

The letter and the list of signers in alphabetical order are included below. For the full text of the letter with footnotes, [click here](#).

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House Committee on Agriculture
1301 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Phone: 202-225-2171 | Fax: 202-225-4464

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